

Using Energy Wisely

SB1248 (Northam): Promotes energy efficiency by electric utilities by providing cost recovery for companies' utility investments in energy efficiency. This will help reduce carbon emissions by changing the bias in current financing rules that makes it more profitable to construct new generating plants than to invest in energy efficiency.

SB1339 (Herring): Provides tools to expand energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources. The legislation allows utilities to set up dynamic electric rates to allow all customers to shift electric use to times when rates are lower and conserve more energy at peak use times. It also raises the state's renewable portfolio standard to 15 percent by 2025. The bill also increases the amount Virginians with renewable energy systems on their homes and businesses are paid when they produce more renewable electricity than they use and put the extra electricity back on the grid.

SB1186 (Hanger) and HB2001 (Cosgrove): Changes the Biofuels Production Incentive Grant Program to create a greater incentive for advanced biofuels that are made from cellulose, hemicellulose, lignin or algae than for biofuels that may be made from food stocks such as corn.

Improving Virginians' Health

HB 1703 (Cosgrove) and SB 1105 (Northam): Bans smoking in restaurants.

HB 2044 (Nixon): Health information technology; adoption of standards. Allows the Information Technology Investment Board to establish an advisory committee, consisting of persons with expertise in health care and information technology, to advise it on the adoption of nationally recognized health information technology technical and data standards.

HB 2456 (O'Bannon) and SB 1112 (Northam): Expands the role of the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation to use private funds and federal grants to promote the prevention of childhood obesity. This bill also changes the Foundation's name to the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth.

HB 2180 (Phillips) and SB 1202 (Puckett): Expands the scope of practice for dental hygienists as part of a health pilot in three underserved health districts: Lenowisco, Cumberland Plateau, and Southside Health Districts.

HB 1981 (McClellan) and SB 1162 (Watkins): Allows COPN holders to contribute money to a private non-profit foundation that funds basic health coverage for indigents in order to meet charity care requirements.

HB 2405 (R. Tyler): Expands the workforce data collected and disseminated by the Department of Health Professions in order to determine shortages. This was a recommendation of the Health Reform Commission.

Helping Foster Children

SB 1049 (Whipple): Expands eligibility for foster care children and former foster care children for college and community college scholarships.

HB 1914 (Bacote): Reemphasizes Virginia's goal of moving children from foster care to permanent custody arrangements.

Promoting Participation in Elections

SB993 (J. Miller) and HB1712(Janis): Federal Write In Ballots; witness requirement- Removes the requirement that a federal write-in absentee ballot will only be considered valid for purposes of simultaneously satisfying both an absentee ballot application and a completed absentee ballot for federal offices if the envelope contains the signature of a witness and his printed name and address. The bill provides that the envelope need only contain the signature of the witness in order for the ballot to be considered valid. The bill also provides that the ballot must be received no later than the closing of the polls rather than five days before the election and that the federal write-in absentee ballot may serve as a registration application if the voter is eligible to register in Virginia.

HB1881 (P. Miller): Emailed Absentee Ballots- Provides that the absentee ballot shall be sent by email to military and overseas voters and their families who are located outside the Commonwealth and who request the ballot be sent by email. However, the voted ballot must be returned by mail.

Protecting Virginia's Land and Waters

HB 1925 (Lewis): Identifies the types of agricultural best management practices that a farmer can implement to be eligible to receive the award. The conservation practices he implements must be effective in controlling agricultural nonpoint source pollutants.

HB 1775 (Pollard) and SB 1211 (Quayle): Charge the Secretaries of Natural Resources and Agriculture and Forestry with the responsibility of developing an invasive species management plan to prevent the introduction of invasive species and to control and eradicate those species that are present on Virginia's lands and waters.

SB 1111 (Northam): Gives the Virginia Marine Resources Commission greater flexibility to adjust blue crab dredging seasons in order to protect and restore blue crab populations in the Chesapeake Bay.

Bringing jobs to Virginia

HB 2442 (Bacote) and SB 1089 (J. Miller): Virginia Investment Partnership Act; Virginia Investment Performance Grants. Raises the per project amount of a grant that may be made under the Virginia Investment Performance Grant program from \$1.5 million to \$3 million. The bill also allows for a maximum of \$5 million for projects meeting certain guidelines.

HB 2550 (Cox) and SB 1119 (Colgan): MEI Project Approval Commission; established. Economic development; incentive financing for major employment and investment projects. Authorizes the Virginia Public Building Authority and the Virginia Resources Authority to finance economic development initiatives for major employment and investment projects (MEI projects) performed by state and local government entities. An MEI project is defined as a high impact regional economic development project in which a private entity is expected to make a capital investment in real and tangible personal property exceeding \$250 million and create more than 400 new full-time jobs, and is expected to have a substantial direct economic impact on

surrounding communities. The bill also establishes the MEI Project Approval Commission to review financing for individual incentive packages for MEI projects to be financed by the Virginia Public Building Authority.

SB 1165 (Watkins): Focuses and targets Virginia's Enterprise Zone program to provide greater certainty for the incentives offered through the program and make the program more effective.

HB 2575 (Putney): Corporate income tax; major business facility job tax credit. Extends the sunset date of the major business facility job tax credit from January 1, 2010, to January 1, 2020, and allows the credit to be taken over a two-year period rather than a three-year period for taxable years beginning January 1, 2009, through December 31, 2010.

SB 1336 (Puckett): Establishes the Governor's Broadband Advisory Council to advise the Governor on policy and funding priorities to expedite deployment and reduce the cost of broadband access in Virginia.

SB 1456 (Petersen): Merges the Innovative Technology Authority (ITA), and the Virginia Research and Technology Advisory Commission into a single entity, named the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Investment Authority (IEIA), to continue the work of the ITA, with heightened responsibilities regarding the oversight of research and development efforts in the Commonwealth.

Helping in Hard Times

SB 1045 (Y.Miller) and HB 1714 (Tyler): Provides additional flexibility under TANF to allow one-time payments in emergency situations to without a person signing up for ongoing TANF assistance.

Strengthening Virginia Colleges and Universities

HB 2464 (Morgan) and SB 1156 (Edwards): Revises and extends the management agreements with Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia, the College of William and Mary, and Virginia Commonwealth University that give those institutions greater autonomy and flexibility.

Protecting Public Safety

HB 2612 (Shannon) and SB 1150 (J. Howell): Emergency response plans; ensuring victims' rights. Emergency plans; victims' rights. Requires all emergency plans to include a provision that the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Virginia Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund shall be contacted immediately to deploy assistance in the event of an emergency as defined in the emergency response plan when there are victims as defined in § 19.2-11.01, as well as current contact information for both.

HB 2123 (A. Howell) and SB 1093 (Locke): Mutual aid agreements; institutions of higher learning. Allows all institutions of higher learning having a police force appointed pursuant to § 23-233, rather than just state-supported institutions, to enter in and become a party to contracts or mutual aid agreements for the use of their joint forces, both regular and auxiliary, equipment, and materials to maintain peace and good order.

HB 1983 (McClellan): Encourages community responders in emergency situations by expanding Good Samaritan laws that protect volunteers or donors of free goods and services from liability for unintended consequences.

Smarter Transportation Planning

HB 2019 (Rust and Bouchard) and SB 1398 (Norment and McEachin): Updates the responsibilities of the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment to include, among other things, identification of corridors of statewide significance for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Plan and establishment of standards for coordination of transportation investments and land use planning. The bill also builds upon the land use measures from House Bill 3202.

HB 1880 (P. Miller): Makes the Department of Rail and Public Transportation responsible for safety and security oversight of fixed rail guideway transit systems.

SB 1238 (Barker): Gives the Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation the same procurement flexibility as the VDOT commissioner in order to streamline the process for moving rail projects forward.

HB 2425 (May): Allows local governments to take responsibility for more roads within their borders.

SB 1242 (Stosch): Authorizes the Virginia Small Business Financing Authority to provide private activity bond financing for developing or operating transportation facilities under the Public-Private Transportation Act.

Protecting Consumer Privacy

HB 2255 (Nichols): Removes the requirement that some disclosure statements filed with the Department of Environmental Quality contain social security numbers.